

The Civilization Genome Project

The Double Helix of Civilization

1. The final end of the state is to make men and women free to develop their faculties and to be morally accountable for their trajectories and destinies. Government directives that defeat or subvert that end are suspect. Paternalism—even for benevolent motives—stunts intellectual development and moral growth and robs individuals of the dignity of success or failure determined by their blood, sweat, and tears.
2. The nation-state is an artificial creation whose sole legitimate purpose is to safeguard the unalienable liberty of citizens (acting individually or in voluntary association with others) to pursue their ambitions and to seek fulfillment free from external or domestic aggression or predation. The nation-state has no interests that transcend the individual interests of its citizens, for example, seeking world domination or accumulating wealth. “Billions for defense, but not one cent for Empire” is the only justifiable military creed of the United States.
3. The state is saddled with the burden of justifying every encroachment on liberty. The individual is never obligated to justify liberty. It is assumed good for its own sake.

4. Due process of law is the most important check on tyranny or injustice ever conceived. It marks the first recognition by man that, "I could be wrong," that events are multidimensional and lend themselves to multiple plausible interpretations, that an accused must be provided an opportunity to confront adverse evidence and to present favorable testimony, and, that an independent and unbiased decision-maker is imperative to avoid miscarriages of justice. (It has been said that there are no facts, only interpretations). Due process must be honored not as an indulgence to suspected culprits, but because of what it says about us as a people willing to incur risks because we believe punishing, killing, or injuring the innocent is morally reprehensible. It is better to be victimized by injustice than to perpetrate it.
5. Power must be both limited and fragmented to insure that neither individuals nor factions may tyrannize or oppress another. Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely because of the ordinary depravity of human nature. Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. Government authority must be splintered among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Transparency must be the rule and secrecy the rare exception and only when necessary to safeguard lives. The most important legislative power is oversight. Sunshine is the best disinfectant. A Constitution must

circumscribe government authority to protect individual liberty against popular majorities. Tyranny by the majority is still tyranny. Because of its monopoly of legal violence, power to conscript and tax, and arsenal of weapons, government is a vastly greater danger to the life and liberty of its citizens than any miscreant or private organization.

6. The glory of a Republic is liberty. The glory of an Empire is domination, control, or conquest.
7. Chronic or permanent wars are irreconcilable with liberty. In times of war, the laws are silent. Individual liberty is readily subordinated to anthems of national security. The executive is predisposed to exaggerate danger to justify objectless wars because in times of conflict tyrannical powers are concentrated in the President, for instance, indefinite detentions without accusation or trial, warrantless surveillance based on the president's say-so alone, or the assassination of American citizens or non-citizens based on secret, unexplained, and politically unaccountable evidence. The exclusive power of Congress to authorize the initiation of warfare must be scrupulously honored. James Madison, father of the Constitution, wrote to Thomas Jefferson: "The constitution supposes, what the History of all Governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. It has accordingly with studied care vested the question of war in the Legislature." A President who commences war without prior express authorization from Congress has committed an impeachable high crime and misdemeanor within the meaning of Article II, section 4 and should be removed from office.
8. The sole justification of war is self-defense from an actual or imminent attack. All other wars constitute crimes of aggression under the international law principles established in the Nuremburg trials. Chief Prosecutor Robert

Jackson elaborated: *“To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.”*

9. A civilized culture pays homage to wisdom, virtue, humility and self-restraint and scorns the temptations of money, power, sex, creature comforts, or domination for the sake of domination. Citizens believe it is better to be a discontented Socrates than a contented cow.
10. The predominant source of influence in a civilized nation is moral suasion founded on impeccable character and wisdom among community leaders versus violence, coercion, or money.